

In the claims

Claims 1-11 [cancelled].

12. [Currently Amended] A packet switch apparatus with oversubscribed port handling capability for use in a switching mesh, the apparatus including:
a plurality of ports; and
a switch controller coupled to the plurality of ports,
wherein the switch controller is configured to (a) detect an oversubscribed port, (b) select a set of paths exiting at the oversubscribed port for retagging, (c) invalidate tags for the set of paths, (d) receive packets with the invalidated tags, and (e) retag the received packets with a tag associated with a detour path;
wherein the invalidated tags and the tags associated with the detour comprise paths assigned to respective ones of the packets and which paths individually comprise a path between an originating source switch and an end destination switch of the respective packet and which includes a plurality of different switches intermediate the originating source and end destination switches; and
wherein the invalidated tags and the tags associated with the detour individually comprise a source switch identifier which identifies the originating source switch of the respective packet of the individual tag and a destination switch identifier which identifies the end destination switch of the respective packet of the individual tag.
13. [Currently Amended] The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the switch controller is further configured to determine the detour path from the detecting switch to [[a]] the end destination switch for the set of paths.
14. [Original] The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the switch controller is further configured to inform an owner switch of the set of paths that the paths are to be retagged by the detecting switch.

Claims 15-22 [cancelled].

23. [Currently Amended] The apparatus of claim ~~22~~ 12, wherein the detour path defines an order of the switches of the detour path to communicate the packets after the retagging and which is different than orders of the switches of respective ones of the selected set of paths to communicate the packets.

Claims 24-25 [cancelled].

26. [Currently Amended] The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the tags associated with the detour remain associated with the received packets after the retagging and during subsequent communications of the received packets to ~~[[an]]~~ the end destination switch by the plural switches of the detour path.
27. [Previously Presented] The apparatus of claim 12, wherein tags of other packets, received by the packet switch apparatus during the retagging of the received packets with the tag associated with the detour path, are not retagged by the switch controller.